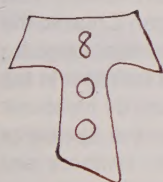




St Francis' Way of Life is blessed by Pope Innocent III, depicted in a fresco in Santa Croce, Florence

St Francis and his Brotherhood: 1209 - 2009

Maurice Carmody



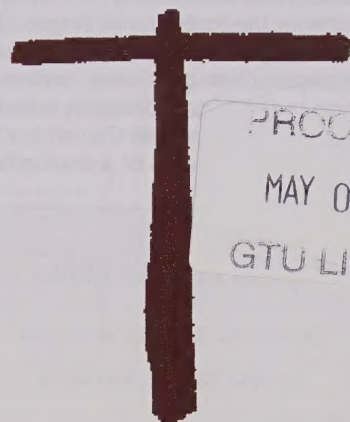
Innocent III, most powerful of medieval pontiffs, glared at the dishevelled young man standing before him. His ignoble countenance, long beard, unkempt hair and dirty, overhanging brow, repulsed him. The text held out to him was hopelessly idealistic. As for his request to preach, that was laughable. The pope despised his visitor. "Go,

brother, and find some pigs to whom you are fit to be compared rather than to human beings. Roll around in the mud and share your rule and preaching with them."

Francis of Assisi, for that was the young man's name, did exactly as Pope Innocent ordered. Covered in filth and undoubtedly smelling to high heaven, he went back to the audience hall and asked the amazed pontiff if he would now grant his petition. Innocent felt sorry for being so cynical. He told Francis to go and wash and then return. Overcome with emotion and perhaps guilt, the pope approved the enthusiastic young man's rule. He could also preach simple sermons, encouraging people to live by gospel principles. The year was 1209. This story, told by an English Benedictine monk, Roger of Wendover, colourfully recalls how Innocent III approved the first Franciscan Rule, eight hundred

years ago. He wrote it a few years after Francis' death in 1226.

Other early accounts of this event are not quite so colourful and perhaps closer to what really happened. However, they all agree that the approval of St Francis' rule for his brotherhood in 1209 marked a critically important step in the history of the Lesser Brothers, or Friars Minor as they are also called. Innocent III's recognition meant that the Church now recognised the brotherhood as a genuine religious order. Francis recorded the moment very simply in his Testament: "And after the Lord gave me some brothers, no one showed me what I had to do, but the Most High Himself revealed to me that



PROCESSED

MAY 05 2009

GTU LIBRARY

800 - not out!

Not a remarkable turn-around in the fortune of the English national cricket team but the number of years since Francis and his small group of brothers in 1209 received approval for their 'Form of Life'. To Francis' surprise, following his conversion, other men recognised what he was doing as a fresh expression of living the gospel of Jesus. "The Lord gave me some brothers ... the Most High himself revealed to me that I should live according to the pattern of the holy gospel." In this *franciscan* our contributions from different churches and places help us to put this event in context and to see some of the results of that original commitment down the centuries and in our own time.

St Francis and his Brotherhood 1209 - 2009

Celebrating the Earlier	1
Franciscan Rule	3
The Cross as the Tree of Life	
in Franciscan Spirituality	4
Christopher Davenport	6
Minister's Letter	7
The House of the Divine	
Compassion - Centenary	8
Community Routes	10
Freedom and Peace through	
Forgiveness	12
Book Reviews	14
A Visit to Iran	16

I should live according to the pattern of the Holy Gospel. And I had this written down simply and in a few words and the Lord Pope confirmed it for me." This year Franciscans throughout the world celebrate that rule's anniversary.

The Rule of 1209 combined a series of gospel texts, chosen by St Francis as a suitable guide to following as closely as possible in the footsteps of Jesus. This text no longer exists. It was gradually swallowed up in other rules, written by Francis in obedience to church authority. These corresponded with Church law and the practical demands of a brotherhood

soon numbering more than 5000 members. The final text, approved by Pope Honorius III in 1223, has remained the official Rule of the First Order of Lesser Brothers ever since.

The First Order as it exists in the Roman Catholic Church is threefold: Conventuals, Friars Minor and Capuchins. Their existence, separate from each other, is the fruit of long and often bitter disagreement over what following in the footsteps of St Francis of Assisi really demanded. The debate began during the saint's lifetime and divided those brothers who wanted to live exactly like Francis and his first companions from those who sought to adapt that way of life to meet the pastoral

Pope Boniface VIII suppressed the group in 1295, arguments over the true nature of the Franciscan charism never disappeared among St Francis' followers. There have been saints and sinners on both sides. Diversity, sometimes creative, sometimes not, became characteristic of the First Order.

This tendency to reform and division proved to be cyclical. After the Spirituals, the desire to live by the Rule, just as St Francis had written it, gave rise to the Observants whom Pope Leo X separated from those commonly known as the Community (Conventuals) in 1517. By then, the Observants in their turn were deeply involved in the bureaucratic, pastoral and academic work of the church. Predictably, other radical groups, determined to live just as Francis and his companions had done, but destined to follow the same path as their numbers grew, broke away from them: Capuchins, Riformati, Discalced or Alcantarines, and Recollects, for example. In 1897, Pope Leo XIII combined the Observants, Riformati, Discalced and Recollects into a single order: the Order of Friars Minor.

Since the nineteenth century, the Franciscan First Order in the Roman Catholic Church has been divided into three independent groups: the Order of Friars Minor Conventual, the Order of Friars Minor and the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin. They each owe obedience to the same rule of 1223 but interpret it with different statutes called general constitutions. In recent times there has been a renewed emphasis on brotherhood that includes both lay brothers and priests working together as equals to put Franciscan ideals into practice. Within the Anglican Church, the First Order also reflects the ongoing discussion about how best to follow in the footsteps of St Francis, living by his ideals in today's world. Known as the Society of St Francis, it includes both brothers and sisters. *f*

franciscan

(published three times a year)

Subscriptions for 2009

United Kingdom	£7
Europe & Surface (outside Europe)	£8
Air Mail (outside Europe)	£9
(SSF cannot reclaim tax on subscriptions)	

For UK & Europe – please send to:

The Subscriptions Secretary
St Francis Friary, Hilfield, Dorchester,
Dorset. DT2 7BE UK

The preferred method for paying subscriptions is by UK Banker's Direct Debit; please request a form from the above address. Cheque or Postal Order payments are also possible.

Please make all cheques payable to:

The Society of Saint Francis

For America & Canada, contact:

Mrs Janet Moore, P.O. Box 341,
Warren, Massachusetts 01083, USA
email: djmoore@samnet.net

For New Zealand, contact:

Rev. Anne Moody, P.O. Box 13-851,
Onehunga, Auckland, N.Z.
email: anne.moody@nettel.net.nz

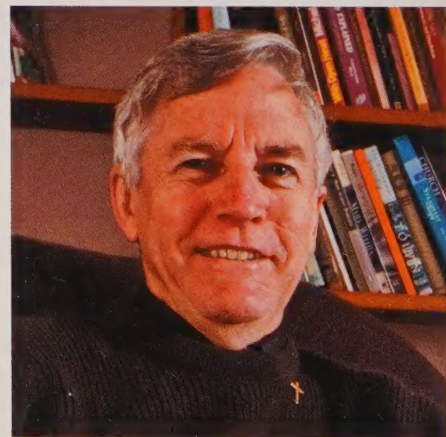
For all other countries, please contact the Subscriptions' Secretary in the U.K.

An audio version of franciscan for the blind and partially sighted is available – contact the Editor if interested.

*The Rule of 1209
 combined a series of
 gospel texts, chosen by
 St Francis as a suitable
 guide to following as
 closely as possible in the
 footsteps of Jesus.*

needs of the Church in a rapidly changing urban society. While the former wished to maintain their status as lay brothers, the latter opted for the priesthood and involvement in the institutional life of the church. The lay brothers emphasised a contemplative lifestyle that included manual work, often living alongside the local people. They wanted to live by the Rule, purely and simply, just as Francis had written it. The ordained brothers preached in churches and helped in parishes wherever the local bishop gave them permission or were involved in missionary activity in distant parts. Intellectuals among them contributed to the development of philosophy, theology and other disciplines in many of the developing universities of the time. Some worked for the pope himself. For the more talented, this meant promotion within the hierarchy. Numbers of them became bishops and a few even popes. With papal approval, these ordained brothers interpreted the Rule in such a way as to facilitate their service of the church wherever they were needed.

Despite the best efforts of St Bonaventure of Bagnoreggio (Minister General from 1257 to 1274) the two groups eventually differed so much from each other that division became inevitable. Bonaventure was convinced that the Order could serve the church while maintaining a simple and poor life in accordance with the ideals of St Francis. Those who seriously disagreed came to be known as Spirituals. In 1294, Pope Celestine V divided the Order for the first time: the Spirituals became the Poor Hermits of Pope Celestine. Although



Maurice Carmody is a priest and Franciscan historian, currently working as pastor of St Francis of Assisi Parish in Stoke, New Zealand. He is author of a recently published history of the Franciscan movement: *The Franciscan Story*, Athena Press, UK, 2008.

Copyright

© The Society of Saint Francis,
 2009 The First Order,
 The European Province
 All rights reserved
 ISSN 0532/579X

All editorial correspondence should be addressed to:

franciscan Editor, St Francis House,
 113 Gillott Road Birmingham, B16 0ET
 or email: franciscan@franciscans.org.uk

Printed by Pensord Press Ltd,
 Pontllanfraith
 on recycled paper

Celebrating the Earlier Franciscan Rule

Paula Pearce SFO



This year Franciscans are celebrating the eighth centenary of the orally approved Proposed Way of Life of the early Brothers, from which the whole Franciscan movement has evolved. How can a Rule of Life excite interest? Much to my surprise I have developed a love and fascination for one and I am delighted to have the opportunity to share why.

The *Earlier Rule* is dated 1209-1221, in *The Saint (Francis of Assisi: Early Documents, Volume 1)*, meaning that the text we have today, is a final version of a work in progress throughout that period. The *ER* has been studied extensively in the Franciscan tradition. It is now recognised as an important and significant source of information concerning the primitive community and this is why I came to get to know and love it.

The *ER* consists of general principles reflecting lived experience of the fundamental principles and this is what attracted me. I have come to appreciate that its articles would have been agreed at Chapters: the primary aim of these gatherings was for the brothers to be reunited with Francis and with one another, to exchange and build upon lived experience, to seek correction and direction and to celebrate and encourage one another. From their lived experience the brothers reached agreement about diverse aspects of how they should live as Lesser Brothers in the context of the times.

It is a long text of 24 chapters and I do not recommend sitting down to read it at a session. One way to explore it is by scanning it focussing on a Franciscan characteristic, for example, minority, poverty, fraternity, obedience, or preaching. The relevant sections are scattered throughout the text so choose one and reflect on what it tells you. I have taken the example of minority:

ER chapter IX, 1-3:

Let all brothers strive to follow the humility and poverty of our Lord Jesus Christ and let them remember that we should have nothing else in the world except, as the Apostle says: 'having food and clothing we are content with these.' They must rejoice when they live among people considered of little value and looked down upon, among the poor and powerless, the sick and the lepers, and the beggars by the wayside. When it is necessary, they may go for alms.

It goes on to exhort the brothers to thank God when "people revile them and refuse to give them alms" (IX n 6).

Here you find a mixture of "we" and

"they"; a scriptural text key for living the apostolic life; the attitude to be shown to different marginalised groups among whom some of the brothers were expected to live; they only sought alms when they needed them and evidently some brothers found this a shameful thing to have to do.

Chapter VII gives examples of work that the brothers, as a result of experience, came to realise clashed with the principle of minority, such as being treasurers and overseers. "Let them, instead, be the lesser ones and be subject to all in the

The text shows that minority was realised in terms of meeting need rather than want, rejecting any attitude of ownership and belonging with the lesser, the "nobodies".

same house" (VII n 2). From the same chapter, we come to know that the brothers were to keep tools and instruments, used in their work before joining the community, in order to help the Brothers to survive by using their individual skills in familiar trades. They could be paid in goods useful for survival and simple living provided they refused monetary payment.

Other parts of the text show that minority was realised in terms of meeting need rather than want, rejecting any attitude of ownership and belonging with the lesser, the "nobodies". Minority required service to other brothers, respect for their mutual equality rather than division according to clerical status, and concern to preserve the bonds of fraternity. (See chapters IV, VI, IX, X and XI)

No-one was to be called prior and the model for service among the brothers was Christ washing the feet of the disciples at the Last Supper.

So Minor Brothers can be understood as follows:

Fratres: equal brothers of one another of the same fraternity.

Minores: at the humble service of one another, subject to all.

Even a cursory look through the *ER* will make the reader aware that it includes prayers, such as the beginning of Chapter 23 and reflections (chapter 22). For the Brothers this was a living text and they carried it with them, sometimes in their hearts. Some parts would have been learned and recited or sung as they travelled on their missionary journeys, reminding them of agreed beliefs and providing pointers to guide them when they were exhorting the people who gathered to listen (chapter 21).

Chapter XVI is inspirational for me, "Going among the Saracens and other Nonbelievers": This includes the observation, "One way is not to engage in arguments or disputes but to be subject to every human creature for God's sake."

I hope that this gives a flavour of the rich diversity within this text. It is a rule of life and contains some instructions and directives but it is so much more. Now I believe we are extremely fortunate to have this source from the time of Francis, and it has brought home to me some facts that I did not know or regard with much importance, but I remember the reluctance with which I initially read this long medieval Rule text as homework for a class on the Writings of Francis.

The *Later Rule* (1223) was written with the influence of Pope Honorius III, Hugolino (Cardinal Protector, later Pope Gregory IX), some brothers and Francis. This was the Rule finally sealed and approved for the brothers, known as the *Later Rule* or *Regula Bullata*. It was an essential instrument of government for a large Order. It reflected changes in work, mainly pastoral and clerical, and accommodation, as many brothers lived in settled places. The brothers had become the Order of Friars Minor, there was a system of government and there were distinctions between the Ministers Provincial and the Minister General. The text is much shorter, more orderly and clearer. f



Paula Pearce is Course Director, Franciscan Studies' Certificate Programmes, at the Franciscan International Study Centre, Canterbury. The text of this article was the basis of an address given at the Formation Conference held at Hilfield in January 2009.

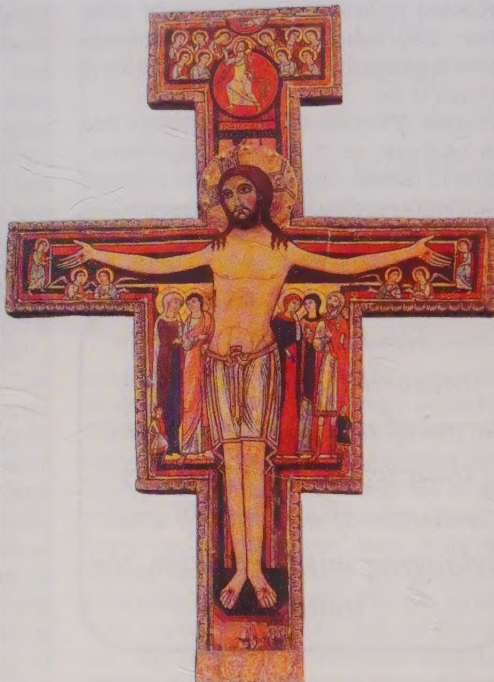


The Cross as the Tree of Life in Franciscan Spirituality

Christopher Irvine

The picture of the Crucified, with the body contorted and disfigured by pain, is firmly imprinted in the Western imagination, and the physical suffering of Christ is a key theme in Franciscan spirituality. To illustrate this, one might look, for instance, at the large painted cross in the Church of San Francesco at Arezzo, in which the habited figure of Francis kneels before the Crucified, his head inclined towards the cross as he caresses the bloodied right foot of the Lord with his hands. Here is an image of true compassion, in this case, of Francis literally 'suffering with' his Crucified Lord. But there is more to be seen when we look back to some of the more iconic Franciscan images and to the written sources of Franciscan spirituality.

In this, the 800th anniversary year of the granting of the Rule of the Friars Minor, Franciscan brothers and sisters throughout the world have been encouraged to reflect on the cross of San Damiano in order to recall the origins of the Franciscan vocation. According to the earliest biographical record of Francis' life, Francis was praying alone in the dilapidated little rural church of San Damiano, outside the city of Assisi on the lower slope of Mount Subasio. From the cross, probably suspended above the altar, Christ addressed Francis directly saying: "My house is in ruins. Go, then, and rebuild it for me". This is only one of the two incidents where the calling of a Christian saint is mediated through a piece of liturgical art, but in Francis' case, what exactly was this image? The cross from the church of San Damiano, though now heavily restored, hangs in the Church of Santa Chiara in Assisi, and is probably one of the most reproduced and familiar images of the cross in the western Christian world. The painted cross is Byzantine in style and is more akin to the Eastern icon than to the naturalistic renderings of later renaissance paintings of the crucifixion. The painted figure of



The San Damiano Cross

way, the viewer is not so much invited to look *into* the painting, and there to contemplate a scene of physical suffering, but to return the attention, the gaze of the crucified One who is depicted in a full frontal way. The question which occurs when one stands before this image is, who exactly is looking at whom? The figure of the crucified in this cross of San Damiano, works in other words like a typical Eastern icon, with its inverse perspective, and its prominent face and exaggerated eyes.

This feature, common in all early icons of the Christian East, recalls the Hebrew word *panim*, usually translated as 'face', carrying the deeper sense of 'presence', and which frequently occurs in the poetry of the Psalms. And so, if we return to the scene of Francis at prayer before the cross at San Damiano, as depicted by the fresco panel attributed to Giotto in the lower band of decoration on the north side of the nave of the Basilica of St Francis in Assisi, what is shown is not simply Francis contemplating a crucified figure, but Francis being

engaged by the crucified and risen Christ himself. So what this cross represents is not a historical single scene as such, but a painted medium which pictorially displays, one might almost say, 'unveils' the Christ who suffered and died before the face of the Father, and was raised by the power and glory of the Spirit. In other words, what we see in the cross of San Damiano is an icon of the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection which meets the gaze of the viewer as he or she attentively focuses in prayer upon the image.

Bonaventure refers to both the cross and to Christ himself as 'the tree of life', and thereby coins the dominant Franciscan metaphor for depicting the saving work of God in Christ.

In art historical terms, there was a shift in style and emphasis in Italian paintings of the cross in the thirteenth century, which in all likelihood was in part influenced by the Byzantine icons of the 'Man of Sorrows'. A large crucifix, commissioned by Brother Elias to hang in the newly constructed Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi, reflected this shift in sensibility and artistic style. This crucifix, painted around 1228 to hang above the high altar in the Upper Church, depicted Brother Elias, the Minister General, embracing the foot of the cross. Although this crucifix is now lost, an imposing cross of this type, painted around 1236, is to be



Arezzo - Basilica of St Francis

Continued on page 5

The viewer is (invited) to return the gaze of the Crucified One...

The question which occurs when one stands before this image is, Who exactly is looking at whom?

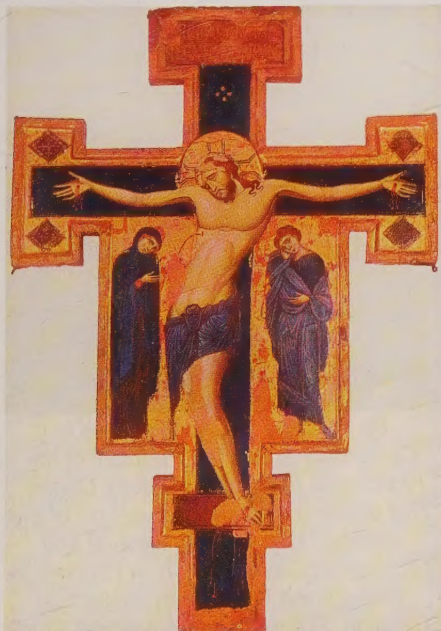
Christ is depicted with arms outstretched, as in a gesture of welcome, and although blood visibly trickles down from his pierced hands and feet and side, the figure faces the viewer without any signs of pain, with large open, almond shaped eyes, and with slightly smiling lips. In this



Florence - Crucifix by Cimabue,

seen in the little Friary Museum of the Basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli, in Assisi. In this depiction, the focus is on the 's' shaped figure of the Crucified, stripped naked, his head hanging forward, and with closed eyes. The figure, though not tortured, is now depicted as being dead on the cross. It is a realistic portrayal of the physical suffering of Jesus, but there is one particular feature in this image which invites comment, and that is the near diaphanous loincloth around the body. It reveals to the viewer the vulnerability of Jesus, and thereby exposes the incarnate Christ, as being flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone. In this sense, the cross of Pisano is as much an icon of the incarnation as it is of the Passion.

The incarnation, celebrated on the feast of the Nativity of Christ, was undoubtedly at the heart of Francis' spirituality, and the story of how Francis, just three years before he died, arranged a Christmas night mass at the manger in Greccio is well documented and illustrated. Further, one may also draw attention to how as much space is given to the Christmas



Assisi - Basilica of St Francis

cycle of events as to the Passion in the decorative fresco scheme in the Lower Church Basilica of St Francis in Assisi.

The focus of Franciscan devotion, therefore, is on the whole Christ, and the whole saving mystery rather than exclusively on any single aspect or episode in the drama of salvation. Entirely consistent with this view is how the later Bonaventure refers to both the cross and to Christ himself as 'the tree of life', and thereby coins the dominant Franciscan metaphor for depicting the saving work of God in Christ.

Pictorially, the image of the cross as the tree of life was developed and became a particular feature of art work commissioned by the Franciscans. A tree of life and Last Supper painted by Taddeo Gaddi in the second quarter of the fourteenth century is found in the Refectory (now the museum) of Santa Croce in Florence, and other stunning examples, commissioned by the Poor Clares include one in Monticello now in the Academia in Florence and in Milan. The close association between the cross and the Last Supper in Gaddi's Tree of Life suggests that we see the gifts of the Eucharist as the fruit of Christ's passion, and come to regard the crucifixion as a kind of planting. This imagery echoes the words in John's Gospel that it is only the seed which falls into the ground and dies which comes to bear much fruit. And in the fuller frame of the whole mystery of Christ, the passion, death, and resurrection of Christ comes to be seen as the divine work of renewing creation. In conclusion, then, we are led to say that in the Franciscan scheme of pictorial theology the cross is so related to creation that salvation itself can be seen as the 'greening' of the natural world! In a world increasingly conscious of the ecological crisis, such a view will have considerable resonance for us, and should strengthen our resolve to care for the environment in this fragile planet earth, so that all its creatures may, as Francis intimated, voice their praise to our Creator God. *f*



Christopher Irvine is Canon Librarian at Canterbury Cathedral, and is author of *The Art of God: the meaning of worship* (SPCK, 2005)

Hilfield Friary 2009

Weekend events at the Friary

16 - 17 May

National Garden Scheme:
Secret Garden Open 2 - 5 pm

22 - 24 May

Catch me if you can: a Retreat with Peter the Fisherman
Reginald SSF

12 - 14 June

Icons, a Brush with Creation
Mary Boorman

For bookings for any of the above,
contact the Guest Brother
Tel 01300 342 313 or
hilfieldguests@franciscans.org.uk

Stigmata Festival

19 September

commencing with Eucharist at noon
and with an address at 2 pm

Hilfield Project - weekend events

15 - 17 May

"Here, Now, Always" - reflecting with T. S. Eliot's Four Quartets
Elizabeth Cook

9 - 10 June

The Ethics and Politics of Climate Change - Bishop George Browning

For bookings or a programme contact:
The Development Officer.
Project Tel: 01300 341 741
hilfieldproject@franciscans.org.uk
www.hilfieldproject.co.uk

Compton Durville 2009

Quiet Days from 10 - 4

led by a sister

(Please bring a packed lunch)

Saturday 13 June

On-growing Journey

Saturday 29 August

God-centred: introducing Centering Prayer

Gardeners Working Party

22 - 27 September

Please book for all the above events.

Individually Guided Retreats

21 - 30 July, 14 - 23 August

or by arrangement

Self-catering accommodation available

For more details of the above, contact:
The Guest Sister, St Francis Convent, Compton Durville, South Petherton, Somerset TA13 5ES

Tel 01460 240473
or email
comptondurvillecsf@franciscans.org.uk

Christopher Davenport - an Early Franciscan Ecumenist

Philippe Yates OFM



Christopher Davenport was born into the religious maelstrom of England at the end of the sixteenth century. In 1616 he left England to study at the Catholic English College in Douai, in Northern France, which had become a centre of English Catholic life because William Allen and a number of Oxford dons fled there when it was clear that Elizabeth's policies would not allow Catholics to practice their religion in peace in England. They established a college that would be a Catholic mini-Oxford. A seminary was soon established in the town to send missionaries back to England and the Catholic mission to Elizabethan England was nurtured by many a priest and martyr from this seminary.

The English Franciscan province owed its survival to the efforts of one of the members of the province during its brief revival under Queen Mary. From the relative freedom of an English prison, probably in 1610, William Stanley recruited John Gennings to the Order and passed on to him the ancient seal of the

Davenport sought to give a theological response to the divisive aspects of the Thirty-Nine Articles.

province. Gennings returned to Douai to recruit companions to continue the English Franciscan Province. Christopher Davenport was one of Gennings' more illustrious recruits to the friars and in 1617 Davenport left Douai, along with two companions, to undertake the novitiate at Ypres under the great Recollect reformer Peter Marchant.

After Ypres, Davenport went to Salamanca to study theology and in 1620 was ordained a priest. It was here that Davenport became established in his scholarship of Duns Scotus. After returning to the Netherlands in 1621 and a brief stay in Brussels, Davenport became the first professor of theology at the new college of St. Bonaventure at Douai, established by the English Franciscans to train the men who were flocking to the renewed province. Davenport remained at Douai until 1632, when he was sent on the mission in England. Here he served Queen Henrietta Maria, Charles I's French Catholic wife.

While in England Davenport wrote his "paraphrastic exposition" or commentary on the Thirty Nine Articles. These 39 articles of faith, distilled from Cranmer's original 42, had been promulgated by Queen Elizabeth I in 1563 (in Latin) and 1571 (in English) as the basis of the faith of the Church of England. As such, Davenport realised that any reconciliation between Catholics and Anglicans would need to address the meaning of these

articles. While at either extreme, the Protestant Puritans and Catholic Jesuits would brook no compromise, moderates in both churches, the High Church Laudian Anglicans and the Catholic secular clergy, searched for common ground. Davenport sought to give a theological response to the problem that appeared insurmountable in dividing these groups of moderates - the Thirty-Nine Articles. He published this in Lyons in 1634 as an appendix to a larger work on grace entitled *Deus, natura, gratia*.

Davenport presented his commentary as a literal understanding of the Articles. This freed him from either having to interpret them as they had been historically interpreted or seeking out their original meaning. He was concerned only

Divergences since the sixteenth century have arisen not so much from the substance of this inheritance as from our separate ways of receiving it.

with those articles that were problematical in their interpretation. On five Articles he made no commentary whatever, of a further nine he simply said: "there is no difficulty with this Article, for it is Catholic doctrine" and of nine more he referred to his main treatise on grace rather than comment here. This left sixteen articles formally explained in his treatise. Sadly there is no room in this piece to follow his arguments, which at times are, admittedly, somewhat contrived.

By reconciling these articles with Catholic faith, Davenport set out an agenda for unity between the Church of England and the Catholic Church. He realised that what he had attempted would be controversial - in his epilogue he wrote "You will esteem the bare words sometimes deserving of severe censure, but the hidden sense, which I have drawn out, you will rightly esteem not very dissonant from the truth, except where

men choose to twist it in another way". The immediate effect of his work, however, was not positive. He was condemned by Jesuits and Puritans, that much was to be expected. But even moderates did not feel able to support him. Archbishop Laud claimed later he had told friends of Davenport that the arguments in the book would not be well received. The crypto-Catholic Lord Treasurer Lord Cottington told Cardinal Barberini that the book pleased no-one. There were calls for its condemnation in Rome. The hands of the Puritans were strengthened against the Laudians in the Church of England because, Puritans claimed, the Catholic nature of Laudian theology was exposed. The anti-Catholic English mob edged closer to the Puritan position and the book was cited in Parliament as manifesting the danger of the English Church being surrendered to Rome. The papal representative in England told Davenport in 1639 never to write a similar book again. Davenport's response was to ask for a list of the book's errors so that he could correct them but it appears no such list was forthcoming.

Thus Davenport's attempts to lay the ground for reconciliation did not have immediate effect. But his methodology was one that would bear fruit in the future - for instead of looking at the apparent meaning of the words of the Thirty-Nine Articles, he endeavoured to look beyond the words to the faith they were trying to express and concluded there was no conflict of substance between the Anglican and Catholic understanding of faith. This approach to ecumenism was to bear much richer fruit in the last century. Davenport would have recognised the sentiment behind the statement of the 1966 Malta Report that inaugurated the Anglican-Roman Catholic

Continued on page 7



Br. Philippe Yates, OFM lives in Canterbury and is the Principal of the Franciscan International Study Centre. This article is an abridged version of the section "17th Century Revival and Christopher Davenport" in: *A Pilgrim Age Through the Franciscan Intellectual Tradition, Franciscan International Study Centre: Canterbury, 2008*

Minister's Letter

Brother Samuel SSF
Minister Provincial of the First Order Brothers,
European Province, writes:

Dear Friends,

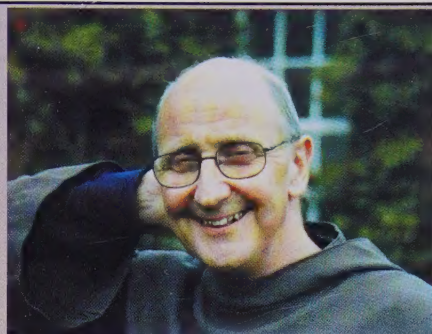
In the portrayal of the creation of Adam on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, attention is often drawn to the small but significant gap between the finger of God and that of Adam, the one stretching out to the other. What is not usually noticed is that the Creator's other arm is wrapped around the shoulders of a beautiful woman - Lady Wisdom, present at the beginning of creation, inherent in the warp and weft of the universe.

Over the past months we've been forced to wake up to the fact that the Lady Wisdom has been rather absent from the attitudes, the practices and the mindsets which have led to the gigantic financial and economic crisis presently engulfing the world - bringing anxiety, insecurity, hardship and poverty to so many. Too late we've recognised the foolishness of lending and borrowing money which didn't really exist at all. Bankers are receiving much of the odium for the disaster, but corporately we've all been caught out; we've all allowed ourselves to be conned by the vision of unlimited growth, the expectation that things can only get better.

We are also waking up to the fact that a similar foolishness has blinded our understanding of the natural environment, that there's an ecological crunch on the way which is potentially at least equal to, if not far more serious than, the credit crunch. Where is the wisdom in the breakdown of a sensitive and attentive relationship with the rest of creation, the squandering and misuse of natural resources, the loss of diverse habitats and species, the destructive effect of the human footprint on the planet?

Franciscans aren't immune to the foolishnesses of contemporary culture, nor, as banks go bust and as the effects of climate change become apparent, have we any right to say 'we told you so', but the present situation does provide us with an incentive to return to the wisdom that Francis himself discovered and treasured, and to learn again how to live and share it with some confidence. In a world which is rapidly losing confidence in the economic model that has dominated its thinking for the past thirty years or more, and in which reliance on the power of the market is being widely questioned, Franciscans should be rejoicing again in the overwhelming abundance of God in and through all things which reaches its fulfilment in the gift of Jesus Christ. We can proclaim that abundance and demonstrate that generosity in our life together, in our working for justice for the poor and marginalised to share God's abundance with equality, in the wisdom of simplicity and in the witness that 'less is more'. In our community life we can choose to embrace and live by an ecology of gift rather than just an economy of work and reward.

Francis' wisdom reminds us too that all life, not only human life but the life of every creature, is in relationship to one another, that we belong together as part of God's family. This runs counter to the deep individualism of our culture which has lost the sense that we are part of one ecosystem, and that the loss of one person or one species will impoverish the whole. Again, our community life, our efforts at reconciliation and peacemaking, and our care for the environment can be powerful witnesses to a wisdom alternative to that which has prevailed in the most recent decades.



Though foolishness has overtaken us in the lead-up to this crisis, what has perhaps most characterised our consumerist culture in recent years has been an absence of joy; true joy which rejoices in the goodness and beauty of God reflected in each other and in the natural world. Despite all the riches of technology which have been heaped upon us, we have remained a deeply dissatisfied society, anxious about the future and passing the blame for whatever has gone wrong. On the other hand, with Francis, there's nothing dour or moralising about following Christ; rather he comes across to us as one who lived delightfully and playfully, like the figure of Lady Wisdom in the Book of Proverbs, 'rejoicing in the inhabited world and delighting in the human race'. Our Franciscan communities are called to be, above all else, places of joy where the life of God's Kingdom is experienced and shared, and where we enter playfully into God's creative purpose for the world.

Francis begins his *Praises of the Virtues* with the words: 'Hail, Queen Wisdom! The Lord save you, with your sister, pure, holy Simplicity'. May we rediscover such wisdom and simplicity today for ourselves and for our world.

Samuel SSF

Continued from page 6

International Commission - ARCIC.

Divergences since the sixteenth century have arisen not so much from the substance of this inheritance as from our separate ways of receiving it. They derive from our experience of its value and power, from our interpretation of its meaning and authority, from our formulation of its content, from our theological elaboration of what it implies, and from our understanding of the manner in which the Church should keep and teach the Faith. Further study is needed to "distinguish between those differences which are merely apparent, and those which are real and require serious examination". The English Franciscan Davenport pioneered such studies, it is up to us to continue them. f



Theme Prayer

Francis' Prayer for the Entire Order

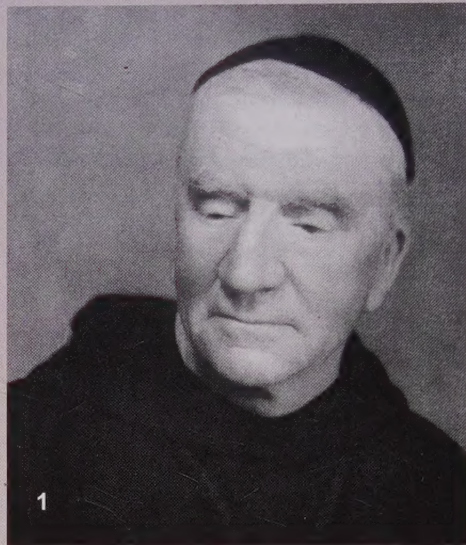
Almighty, immortal, just and merciful God,
 give to us poor creatures to do for you
 that which we know to be your will,
 and to will always that which is well-pleasing to you;
 so that, inwardly purified, illumined and enkindled
 by the flame of your Holy Spirit,
 we may be enabled to follow in the footprints
 of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,
 and by your grace at length attain to you, the Most High;
 who in perfect Trinity and simple Unity,
 live and reign, God all-powerful,
 for ever and ever.

The Daily Office SSF p.288

The House of the Centenary Celebrations

The Society of the Divine Compassion occupied the house at 42 Balaam Street from 1908 until 1952, when there were only two brothers left in the order. Although SDC was not founded as a Franciscan order, it soon identified itself as such, so when SSF took over the house, they continued the tradition of a Franciscan presence and ministry there. (1) Father Andrew SDC was one of the founders of SDC and spent much of his life in Plaistow, ministering among the poor. The current ministry to asylum seekers and refugees carries on the work that SDC did in taking in Belgian refugees during the First World War, and the prison ministry of SSF brothers who lived at Plaistow links with Fr. Andrew's preaching at Wandsworth and Brixton prisons. Fr. Andrew was also a priest in the mission district of St Andrew's, which included St Philip's Church where he was based, and over the years SSF brothers have also had this role, most notably Geoffrey who supervised the rebuilding of St Philip's after it was bombed during the Second World War.

Although SDC had had a presence in Plaistow for some 14 years prior to their moving to 42 Balaam Street, the centenary celebrations on 15 October 2008 specifically recognised the ministry that had been based in that house for 100 years. (2) Evening Prayer, with much joyful singing, was held in the church of St Philip and St. James. (3) **Archbishop Rowan Williams** gave a homily with teaching about God, and prayer, two foundation stones of the religious life that has been lived there over the years. Various C/SSF members took part. **Joyce** read one of the lessons, in recognition of the contribution sisters have made to the life of the house and **Samuel** read the second lesson. One of the hymns sung was 'O dearest Lord, Thy sacred head...', written by Fr. Andrew SDC. (4) After the service in the church, the Archbishop led the congregation of about 300 in procession along Whitwell Road, singing and dancing, to 42 Balaam Street (5) where **Julian** and a local choir greeted them. There were 100 rings on the house bell, followed by (6) a blessing of the building by the Archbishop. The evening was rounded off with a reception in the church hall. Some of the First Order members who attended the celebrations: (7) **Arnold** (8) **Donald** (9) **Edmund** (10) **Reginald** with **Gina** and **Joyce**, (11) **Philip Bartholomew**, (12) **Giles**.



1



2



4



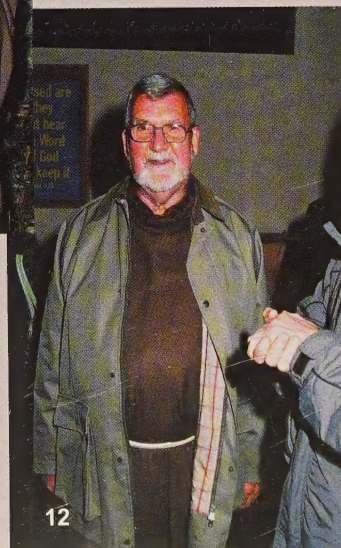
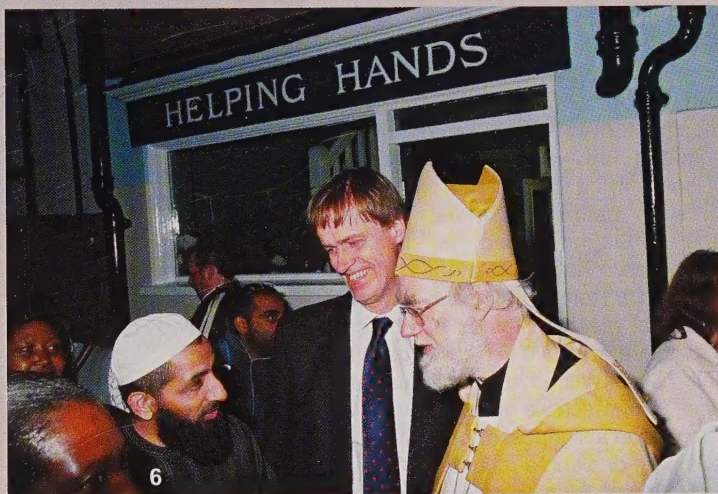
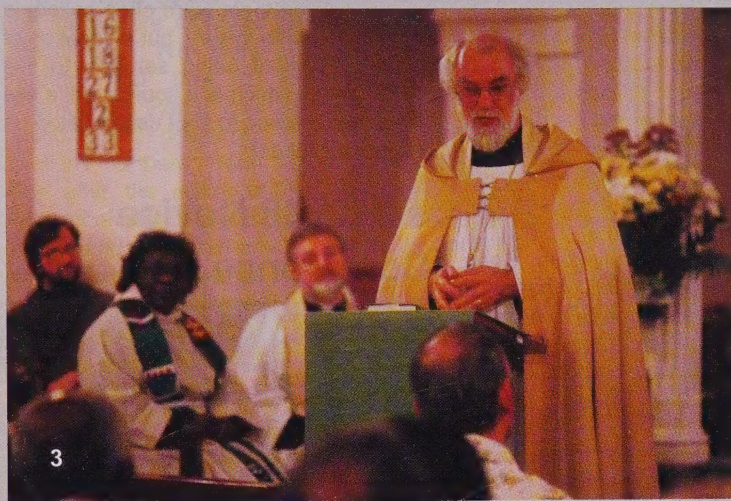
7



8

9

ine Compassion - ns, October 2008



Community Routes

◆◆Roots and Shoots

This year's C/SSF Formation for Life conference took place at Hilfield from the 8th to the 12th of January and formed part of our commemoration of the approval of the first Rule for Francis and his brothers in 1209. We called it 'Roots and Shoots', wanting to look both at our origins as Franciscans and where the signs of growth are at the present time. To help us in our learning and our reflection, **Colin Wilfred** gave a talk on a biblical basis for a Rule of Life, Paula Pearce SFO brought alive the context in which Francis founded the movement and was responsible for the Earlier and Later Rules. Canon Christopher Irvine of Canterbury Cathedral drew our attention to the visual side of Franciscanism evinced in the painting of crosses for Franciscan churches in the thirteenth century. **Helen Julian** and **Colin Wilfred** helped the conference to understand how a fairly tangled history of Anglican Franciscan development, over the last century or so, has ended up with most Anglican Franciscans living under a rule written for a Christian ashram in India! Paula Pearce SFO introduced us to the contemporary Roman Catholic Third Order Regular Rule and **Samuel** drew out the practical meaning for us of Francis' Rule for those who Live in Hermitages. In his talk, Colin Wilfred reminded us that 'regular', from which we get our word 'rule' can also mean a signpost or railing to help travel a path or climb a mountain. As we continue to explore how to live a spiritual rule in the twenty-first century we are reminded that the dynamic response of Francis and the first brothers to Christ's call to live the gospel life still has spiritual power and energy as we seek to live it out in a very different context.

Most of the twenty participants in the conference were from the First Order sisters and brothers but we also had two Third Order members. We explored together our different forms of Anglican Franciscan identity: of being confident in being 'counter-cultural' where necessary, of being challenged by the Rules written



Attentive listeners - **Liz, Joanna Coney and Stuibhart McPhail** at 'Roots and Shoots'

by our founders, of being willing to take risks and that being an Order of Penitents (as the first brothers were often called) is not a vocation to misery, but a vocation of liberation and of being set free to live under a Rule which is a source of life like a well, not a fence to shut us in or stop us making mistakes!

◆◆ 2008 Novice Conference



Back row: **Peter, Martin John, Gerardo, Larry;**
Front row: **Benedict** (SSF Novice Guardian),
Beverley (CSF Novice Guardian), **Polly, Jenny Tee** attended the first week, so had left Hilfield by the time of the photo opportunity.

Martin John writes: Six fresh-faced novices (combined age 274!) gathered for the Annual Conference, towards the end of October, receiving a warm welcome from the weather and all at Hilfield. Over the three weeks, the time-tabled input was to a very high standard again and the different speakers interlinked beautifully. It was particularly enriching to listen to the professed brothers and sisters talking about their perspective on religious life during the Vows Project. This, combined with the time for sharing and relaxing together means that we have a strong peer group developing and our thanks are extended to Beverley and Benedict for all their hard work.

Polly writes: One of the delights for me as a sister is just being around the Friary - in another Franciscan house with a wide mixture of people from the brothers, Project members and various guests. I also enjoy the beautiful Dorset

countryside as well as the cats, chickens and sheep.

◆◆La Piñata

Gerardo explains the origin of a custom he shared at Hilfield before Christmas, and which was concluded during the 'Roots and Shoots' conference.

When the first missionaries arrived in Mexico, they were faced with a very different way of life from the one they were used to. The conquest meant not only taking over territories that had recently been discovered as America, but it was also the imposition of a language, Spanish customs and habits and, among other things, religion. It was not easy for the evangelists to change the ideology of belief in many gods of the many different Indian populations, so they had to invent strategies to teach the mysteries of God to the Indians.

One of the most complicated dogmas was sin and the way in which Satan tempts us. The missionaries had to teach them about how we must be strong to beat the Devil; that that's how we reap the benefits of heaven... how complicated!

It was the Franciscans who found the answer ... a piñata!

They designed a huge ceramic pot covered with colored paper in the shape of a star, with each one of the points representing one of the seven deadly sins. It was something that would come down from and then rise up to the sky (hence the shape of the star) and it would bother people... touch them... tempt them!

So, you have to hit it hard, overcome the temptation, break the evil, put all your attention into getting rid of evil. But it's not easy! Sin blinds us with a blindfold, and our family and friends and others who surround us are the ones who have to



The piñata strung up ready to be wrecked in order to release its sweets

guide us in order to break the chain of evil.

When someone is well guided, the piñata is broken! Then, from heaven, we are showered with gifts... fruit, candy, toys. Evil has been destroyed, God is with us, the missionaries have accomplished their duty and Mexicans enjoy one of our most fun and exciting traditions. (The traditional stuffing of the piñata was cane sugar sticks, oranges, shelled peanuts and jicamas, which are a locally grown juicy tuberous root.)

The usual piñata season is the nine days before Christmas, when Mexicans celebrate *The Posadas*, a festival that reminds us of the pilgrimage of Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem looking for a place to stay. People sing litanies and canticles on a procession and, knocking the doors of neighbors ask for *posada* (hospitality) which is denied twice and at the third time, the family who offers the *posada*, finally allows the procession to get in to the house chanting the traditional canticle. Delicacies are served to the guests and the piñata is broken.



Samuel taking a turn in an attempt to break the pinata

◆◆Refugees: Friendship is mutual

During the Kosovo crisis around the turn of the millennium, many refugees from that conflict were dispersed to the Birmingham area. Birmingham Churches Together responded by forming Restore, an organization which aimed primarily to befriend the refugees and provide a source of information for adapting to life in the UK, thus helping to restore their dignity and self-respect. Restore has since expanded its work to include all asylum seekers and refugees in the area, and has also broadened its remit to include some advocacy work.

Various sisters and brothers have been or are involved with assisting asylum seekers in various parts of the country. **Maureen** befriended Aferdita, an Albanian, through Restore. Here, Aferdita writes of her experience.

July 2001 - The hope for life had come to the end. Political problems were becoming deeper and deeper between us and the Socialist party. My husband was told he had to choose one of two ways: to work for the Socialist Party 'to become a killer', or to be killed by them. I had

already lost my parents and my brother as a result of similar problems. The best way for me and my husband was to leave the country and not to be victims of socialist crimes.

One week before we left there were Albanian elections. We were hoping that the PD (Democratic Party) was going to be in power but it didn't happen. Next day after the elections we received a death threat and the children were in real danger as well. To leave Albania wasn't easy but there was no chance to get a visa through the embassies and anyway we had to be hidden because they were looking to kill us because as a family we were very supportive of the PD.

Finally we decided to leave Albania illegally. Life is uncertain in this kind of case but it was the last chance for us so we decided to take the risk. We had to travel for four days hidden in a lorry full of vegetables. We had no idea where the lorry was going, we just wanted to get out of Albania. After four days there was no more food left and no water. We were all tired, hungry, thirsty and sick. There was no other way than to bang on the wall and tell the driver that we were at the back of his lorry. The driver was very surprised to see us there. Another family was with us, with three children and the year-old baby was nearly dying and as I could speak a little English, I asked the driver to stop the lorry and let us off. The driver called the police, who came very quickly and were very polite and kind. They brought crisps, biscuits and water for us and for our children. We were very impressed with what they did for us. Later on we were taken to the police station where we had to give our details. The very first week we were refused asylum from the Home Office. The situation was very stressful for me and my husband. We were supposed to stay in a house in Handsworth until the Home Office would take the last decision on our case, but we



With the closure of the Brixton house in January, the sisters who were there have moved to Southwark, where they will continue to be involved in fostering spiritual development, including having people living with them in community. Pictured is the community group soon after the move: Joyce, Nigel Chapelle, Anna Verey, Gina, and Jennifer Chan.

knew no one in Birmingham despite the fact that there are lots of Albanian and Kosovan people there. The closest person to our family was **Maureen** who used to come to visit us, take us to Christmas parties, and sometimes to the park. Through her and Restore, we met lots of people from Kosovo, Albania and other countries who were experiencing the same difficulties as us. Alison, another person connected with Restore, coached one of the children in the intricacies of the English language prior to his exams, probably a contributing factor to his success in gaining a scholarship to a prestigious secondary school. Restore was the only organization which helped us as asylum seekers and refugees.

Maureen adds:

After seven years of waiting for a date to appeal against the refusal to be granted refugee status, the family was suddenly granted leave to remain in the UK indefinitely. We were all very pleased that the stress of waiting was over. Aferdita and her husband have since saved hard in order for the family to apply for British citizenship, and they received their certificates of naturalization in January. As with many refugees, they provide skills and a richness to this country that is beneficial to the community.

◆◆Round up

Jenny Tee made her profession in Birmingham on 24 January, and **Gerardo** (Gerardo Roma-Garcia) was admitted as a novice at Hilfield on the same day and moved to Canterbury later in January. **Larry** has withdrawn from the novitiate. **Desmond Alban** has been appointed Novice Guardian to succeed **Benedict** from Pentecost. **John** has moved from Hilfield to Harehills, Leeds. **Bart** has moved to Brisbane, Australia at the commencement of six months each in the Australia-New Zealand and Solomon Islands Provinces. f



Maureen and Aferdita after the Citizenship ceremony

Freedom and Peace through Forgiveness

John SSF

Last October John accompanied a party of sixth-formers from Sherborne School on a visit to Rwanda. Below are some of his recollections.

A three-hour minibus journey south from Kigali provided ample evidence that we were in the "land of a thousand hills". We had arrived at Murambi, a lush, remote beauty-spot surrounded by woods and distant azure mountains. Our destination was a vocational school where no lesson had ever been taught. Before its

(Reconciliation, Evangelism and Christian Healing), whose director, Anglican priest Philbert Kalisa, was our guide. Alphonsine, 19 at the time, was repeatedly raped, cut with machetes and left for dead by the Interahamwe (Hutu killing squads). Rescued by a neighbour, she and her brother Emmanuel, who fled to Tanzania, alone remained of their extended family. Angry that Emmanuel received Hutus in his house, it took Alphonsine years to forgive, but as he put it to her, "How can we live alone?" Faustin, a school friend, served a lengthy prison sentence for the murder of their brother. After his release he came to beg their forgiveness, and has since helped to build Alphonsine a house of her own, an act of reparation and healing for them all, and one of REACH's peace-building initiatives. He



Anastasia with Stephanie and Philbert, Kalisa, whose vision founded REACH.

completion it became a rounding-up point for hunted Tutsis, approximately 50,000 of whom were massacred here on 20th April 1994. Most are buried in the mass grave, but wandering the classrooms we were confronted by hundreds of tangled, decaying corpses piled on wooden platforms, many of them children with pierced skulls. The eerie silence penetrated us. This brutally raw memorial flung the horrors of genocide in our faces. We met Emmanuel, a bullet-pocked survivor who lingers here every day where, somewhere, his wife lies buried with all of their five children. Though

regularly walks miles to visit them. They share meals, and laughter.

Pregnant and on the run in the bush with two daughters, Stephanie was captured and taken to see her husband for one last time. She was chased away before he was dismembered. Her prayer was not to become hard-hearted like the perpetrators; later she came to know Christ. Now she is the proud owner of a new, virtually empty house, a haven for her girls and 14 year-old son, Daniel. She reflected, "God created Adam, and Eve from Adam. But of the two, who was a Hutu and who was a Tutsi? I realised that



since remarried, he is still too traumatised to work, but drinks less these days.

Equally stunning were the testimonies of murderers and survivors we met in Kirehe who had been reconciled to one another through the ministry of REACH

people had no reason to kill each other. Other people who feel disturbed come here and we pray together".

Stephanie's frequent guest was Anastasia, formerly a minor local government official, who ordered the slaying of one Tutsi neighbour. She told us, "Because of what I did, I became a murderer, a refugee and a prisoner. I didn't even deserve to be a citizen of our country again, but here I am. I came to learn that when you have made an offence like that, you need to confess." Considered by REACH to be like anybody else, Anastasia contributes her skills in art and crafts to income-generating projects for widows.

Philbert's vision first met with a concerted response from an

interdenominational group of pastors and youth leaders in Kayonza, where we were feted with a spectacular display of drumming and dancing, and listened to the youth choir of Hutus and Tutsis sing songs about rebuilding a united, peaceful Rwanda. Shared cultural activities and sport are key to preventing a recurrence of violence. We toiled inexpertly amid African laughter at the laying of foundations for a youth centre, and celebrated the official opening of a newly-cleared football pitch, a gift from Sherborne School.

Back in Kigali we visited Peace International school, a few ramshackle classrooms huddling together on the red hillside of one of the slum districts. Operating independently of the state sector, the school welcomes pupils aged 4 - 16 from among the city's poorest, including orphans and Congolese refugees. Despite minimal resources, the dedication of the Christian staff has enabled some to progress to university, and others to vocational training which gives them a livelihood. The headmaster, Father Dennis, works five months each year in forestry in Canada to help pay the teachers' salaries.

On the outskirts of the capital a new building is about to take shape. Land, government permission and building materials have all been secured for the construction of the first phase of a Centre for Peace and Reconciliation to serve not just Rwanda, but the wider population around Africa's Great Lakes. Today Rwanda is a tightly-run country exhibiting hopeful signs of reconstruction. The atrocities that marred the lives of those we met have left nobody in this small nation untouched. For many the journey to freedom and peace through forgiveness has not yet begun. To witness the transformation in these brothers and sisters, though, is to be humbled and inspired, and to be left wanting to go back and play a tiny part in ensuring a life-giving future.

Read more at www.reach-rwanda.org
Donations to REACH made payable to SSF may be forwarded to John at the friary in Leeds. f



John with Anastasia

AMERICAS

Little Portion Friary, PO Box 399, 48 Old Post Road, Mt Sinai, NY 11766/0399, USA

☎ (631) 473 0553; fax: (631) 473 5093

✉ mtsinaifriary@s-s-f.org

Minister General SSF: ☎ clark.berge@s-s-f.org

San Damiano Friary, 573 Dolores Street, San Francisco, CA 94110, USA ☎ (415) 861 1372;

fax: 861 7952; ✉ judehillssf@aol.com

✉ Minister Provincial SSF: judehillssf@aol.com

St Clare's House, 1601 Oxford Street, Berkeley, CA 94709, USA ☎ (510) 725 0404

Saint Francis House, 3743 Cesar Chavez Street, San Francisco, CA 94110, USA ☎ csfsfo@aol.com

☎ (415) 824 0288; fax: (415) 826 7569

✉ Minister Provincial CSF: jeancsf@aol.com

AUSTRALIA / NEW ZEALAND

The Friary, Saint Philip's Rectory, 115 Cornwall Street, **Annerley**; postal address: PO Box 6134, **Buranda**, Brisbane, Qld 4102, Australia

☎ (07) 3391 3915; fax: 3391 3916

✉ brdonald@franciscan.org.au

Hermitage of Saint Bernardine, PO Box 46, **Stroud**, NSW 2425, Australia

☎ (02) 4994 5372; fax 4994 5527

✉ ssfstred@bigpond.com

✉ Minister Provincial: bralfred@franciscan.org.au

The Friary of the Divine Compassion, PO Box 13-117, Hillcrest, **Hamilton** 2034, New Zealand

☎ (07) 856 6701; ✉ friary@franciscan.org.nz

EUROPE

The Friary, **Alnmouth**, Alnwick, Northumberland NE66 3NJ ☎ (01665) 830213; fax: (01665) 830580

✉ alnmouthssf@franciscans.org.uk

✉ secretaryssf@franciscans.org.uk

Anglican Chaplaincy, Vicolo Pallarani 5, 06081 **Assisi** (PG), Italy ☎ (+39) 075 816 887

✉ thomasanthonyssf@franciscans.org.uk

Saint Francis House, 113 Gillott Road, **Birmingham** B16 0ET ☎ (0121) 454 8302

✉ birminghamssf@franciscans.org.uk

Provincial Secretary CSF

✉ secretaryssf@franciscans.org.uk

Saint Matthias' Vicarage, 45 Mafeking Road, **Canning Town**, London, E16 4NS

☎ (020) 7511 7848

✉ canningtownssf@franciscans.org.uk

The Master's Lodge, 58 St. Peter's Street, **Canterbury**, Kent CT1 2BE ☎ (01227) 479364

✉ canterburyssf@franciscans.org.uk

Addresses

Saint Francis Convent, **Compton Durville**, South Petherton, Somerset TA13 5ES

☎ (01460) 240473; fax: 242360

✉ comptondurvillessf@franciscans.org.uk

✉ ministercsf@franciscans.org.uk

Bentley Vicarage, 3a High Street, Bentley, **Doncaster**, DN5 0AA ☎ (01302) 872240

Saint Mary's Convent, 178 Wroslyn Road, **Freeland**, Witney, Oxon OX29 8AJ

☎ (01993) 881225; fax: 882434

✉ community@oscfreeland.co.uk

The Old Parsonage, 168 Wroslyn Road, **Freeland**, Witney, Oxon OX29 8AQ ☎ (01993) 881227

Saint Mary-at-the-Cross, **Glasshampton**, Shrawley, Worcester WR6 6TQ

☎ (01299) 896345; fax 896083

✉ glasshamptonssf@franciscans.org.uk

The Friary, **Hilfield**, Dorchester, Dorset DT2 7BE

☎ (01300) 341345; fax: 341293

✉ hilfieldssf@franciscans.org.uk

✉ Minister Provincial SSF: ministerssf@franciscans.org.uk

The Vicarage, **Holy Island**, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland TD15 2RX ☎ (01289) 389 216

✉ holyislandssf@franciscans.org.uk

Provincial Bursar SSF: ✉ bursarssf@franciscans.org.uk

Saint Matthew's House, 25 Kamloops Crescent, **Leicester** LE1 2HX ☎ 0116 253 9158

✉ leicestercsf@franciscans.org.uk

Provincial Bursar CSF: ✉ bursarcsf@franciscans.org.uk

84 Copgrove Road, **Leeds** LS8 2ST ☎ 0113 226 0647

House of the Divine Compassion, 42 Balaam Street, **Plaistow**, London E13 8AQ ☎ (020) 7476 5189

✉ plaistowssf@franciscans.org.uk

The Vicarage, 11 St Mary's Road, **Plaistow**, London E13 9AE ☎ (020) 85524019

✉ stmarycssf@franciscans.org.uk

St Alphege Clergy House, Pocock Street, **Southwark**, London SE1 0BJ ☎ 020 7928 8912

✉ southwarkssf@franciscans.org.uk

Minister General CSF:

✉ ministergeneralssf@franciscans.org.uk

Our Lady of the Angels, 8 Knight Street, **Walsingham**, Norfolk. NR22 6DA ☎ (01328) 820762

✉ walsinghamssf@franciscans.org.uk

PO Box 1003, Gumi Post Office, **Gumi**, Gyeongbukdo, 730-021, Republic of Korea

☎ 054 451 2317; ✉ koreankfs@hotmail.com

First Order Gift Aid Secretary: Saint Francis Convent, **Compton Durville**, South Petherton, Somerset TA13 5ES ☎ (01460) 240473

Minister Provincial TSSF: Joanna Coney, 4 Rowland Close, Lower Wolvercote, Oxford OX2 8PW ☎ (01865) 556456

✉ ministerstssf@franciscans.org.uk

Franciscan Aid TSSF: The Treasurer TSSF Leslie Johnson, 15 Breton House, Barbican, London EC2Y 8DO ✉ franciscanaid@franciscans.org.uk

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Saint Mary of the Angels Friary, **Haruro**, PO Box 78, Popondetta 241, Oro Province ☎ PNG 329 7060

Geoffrey's Friary, **Katerada**, PO Box 78, Popondetta 241, Oro Province

Saint Francis Friary, **Koki**, PO Box 1103, Port Moresby, NCD ☎ & fax: PNG 320 1499

✉ lucaskays@gmail.com

✉ Minister Provincial: lhaje@datec.net.pg

Martyrs' House, PO Boz 78, **Popondetta**, Oro Province ☎ PNG 3297 491

Philip Beawa Friary, **Ukaka**, PO Box 22, Alotau, Milne Bay Province

SOLOMON ISLANDS

St Francis Friary, PO Box 7, **Auki**, Malaita Province ☎ 40054

La Verna Friary / Little Portion, **Hautambu**, PO Box 519, Honiara, Guadalcanal

Patteson House, PO Box 519, **Honiara**, Guadalcanal ☎ Honiara 22386; Regional Office: ☎ & fax 25810

San Damiano Friary, Diocese of Hanuato'o, **Kira Kira**, Makira Ulawa Province

St Bonaventure Friary, **Kohimarama** Theological College, PO Box 519, Honiara, Guadalcanal ☎ 50128

Michael Davis Friary, PO Box 519, Honiara, Guadalcanal

Holy Martyrs Friary, Luisalo, PO Box 50, Lata, **Temotu** Province

WEBSITES

C/SSF European Province: www.franciscans.org.uk

CSF Province of the Americas: www.communitystfrancis.org

SSF Province Province of the Americas: www.s-s-f.org/

SSF Australia / New Zealand Province: www.franciscan.org.au

Third Order SSF European Province: www.tssf.org.uk

Korean Franciscan Brotherhood: www.francis.or.kr/

Hilfield Friary: www.hilfieldfriary.co.uk

Hilfield Peace and Environment Project: www.hilfieldproject.co.uk

Hilfield Youth Camp: www.hilfield.org

Celebrating Common Prayer: www.oremus.org/liturgy/ccp/

Exciting Holiness: www.oremus.org/liturgy/e-h/

Anglican Religious Orders Year Book: www.orders.anglican.org/arcyb/

Church of England: www.church-of-england.org/

Anglican Communion: www.anglicancommunion.org/

Hilfield Youth Camp (13 - 17 year olds)

9 - 16 August 2009

Contacts:

Ali Waller: 07725617195 email: andy.allyhyc@hotmail.co.uk

Bookings - Andy Currin email: andy_currin@talk21.com

View the video on the website!

Pilgrims of St Francis

2009 International Pilgrimage

29 July - 7 August

Stratford upon Avon to Coventry Cathedral

Contact

Gill Myall: 0121 443 5198 email: sfpilgrims@talktalk.net

website: www.cdsf.org

Book Reviews

Samuel Wells and Sarah Coakley, (Eds)
Praying for England
Priestly Presence in Contemporary Culture
 ISBN 9780 5670 3230 0
 Continuum, 2008, £16.99

This book represents a conscious effort on the part of the 'Littlemore Group' to correct and expand current popular perceptions of the priestly vocation. Far from being a random anthology of loosely connected bright ideas, it is clearly a carefully planned catena and issues from a conference at Littlemore in August, 2005, in which all the contributors were participants.

What awaits us within this arresting cover design? The scene is set in Sarah Coakley's Introduction: Prayer, Place and the Poor. Stephen Cherry reminds us that the parish priest is still looked to as a spokesperson and representative for a community in trauma - of 'unspeakable horror'.

Peter Wilcox portrays the cultural and imaginative power of the beautiful game, (return to the cover!) Sam Wells explores the consequences of the vicar's abdicating the throne on which he/she is placed by most Anglican congregations who are only too delighted to have a monarchical presbyterate, and enrolling the talents of worshippers in the planning and execution of what happens in church.

Edmund Newey, in a chapter called 'Presence', tells us about the continuing significance in 'secular' society of the church's being there at times of bereavement, or, of celebration. Jessica Martin writes courageously about her private life, in order to emphasise that all priesthood is exercised by a person, sometimes through that life's crises which can make ministry problematic.

In 'Honesty' Andrew Shanks looks at Anglican history with its many betrayals of honesty, and sketches a possible future vocation for the Church of England. Grace Davie expands this vision into a European and global setting.

This book gives its readers hope for the church. Archbishop Rowan Williams' epilogue should be read as a preface!

Anselm, SSF

Patricia Jordan FSM
An Affair of the Heart
A Biblical and Franciscan Journey
 ISBN: 9780 8524 4690 4
 Gracewing, Leominster, 2008, £7.99

Patricia Jordan FSM
Come Apart And Rest For A While
 ISBN: 978 085244 691 1
 Gracewing, Leominster, 2008, £9.99

An Affair of the Heart, while based on the author's doctoral thesis: "A Spirituality of the heart in the context of the Franciscan eremitical tradition", is markedly

devotional in character.

Sister Patricia commends to her readers a wholehearted exploration of God's unconditional personal love. She elucidates the biblical concept of *hesed* (steadfast love) drawing particularly on Hosea, and considers the place of the heart in the Bible, the Fathers, and the Franciscan tradition. Lastly she explores hermitage experience in early Franciscan writing. Each of her five chapters concludes with four sections of Invitations to Prayer: scripture quotations; questions and suggestions for reflection; psalms using Merrill's *Psalms for Praying*; and prayers of St. Francis.

Come Apart and Rest for a While is a guide for people visiting the "Portiuncula", a purpose-built hermitage complex in the grounds of the author's Franciscan Minoress convent at Clay Cross in Derbyshire. This imaginative new building and specially designed parts of the grounds were inspired by the author's study of early Franciscan eremitical life, her visits to the original Franciscan sites, and her "Franciscan solitude" experiences. The architecture, which is beautifully executed, incorporates clear references to places, stories and concepts drawn from early Franciscan writings. There is much symbolism.

The book is a devotional commentary on all aspects of the "Portiuncula", with many excellent photographs which enable it to serve as a resource for journeys made in thought and imagination to the original Franciscan sites, as well as for actual visitors to Clay Cross. The text is written in the first person, as if spoken by St. Francis as the reader's retreat guide. I found this device contrived and obtrusive, but evidently others have found it helpful. There are several suggestions for prayer while walking a labyrinth, and scripture texts for the mysteries of the Rosary. Photographs and scripture texts are supplied for the Stations of the Cross.

The author's style is somewhat cloying for my taste. That said, both books contain much useful material, and could be profitable retreat guides or resources for prayer. Although clearly connected, each volume will stand alone.

Sue CSF

Mark Barrett OSB
Crossing
Reclaiming the Landscape of our Lives
 (New Edition)
 ISBN 9780 2325 2696 7
 D.L.T., 2007, £10.95

The TV documentary series *The Monastery*, recording the experiences of five men who made an extended retreat at Worth abbey in 2004, aroused wide interest and made many people ask what monasticism had to say to the world today. It is still a common view that monks and nuns shut themselves up to escape from the pressures and responsibilities of real life. In response to

the widespread interest in *The Monastery* Mark Barrett, a monk of Worth who was himself involved in the programme, has produced the second edition of *Crossing*. He shows that, far from being an escape from reality, the monastic way as described in the Rule of St Benedict, our seeking God, means discovering who we are and living to the full. "We do not meet God in the abstract."

In five chapters which follow the pattern of the Daily Office Dom Mark shows that "monastic spirituality, which could otherwise appear distant to those who do not live behind monastery walls" is "a spirituality relevant to anyone who has to cope with a pattern of repeated experiences." He provides "a series of reflections on finding the presence of God in aspects of our regular experience, a process which ... may assist the seeker in mapping the paths of his or her own life." Whether by acknowledging a reluctance to pray or to face the coming day (Vigils), or our need to "let go" and face the fact of death (Compline), we are invited to be honest about ourselves. The reflections on the labyrinth - life going round in circles so that we keep finding ourselves back where we were - (Midday Prayer), on lectio divina (Vespers) and on relationships (Compline), I found particularly helpful. This is a book to be read more than once. Illustrations from the writer's experience and reading abound. There are treasures there and I want to go back and savour many pages again. Monastic spirituality is about responding to God in terms of what he has made us - fully human - and our need to travel with others.

Reginald SSF

Mary Midgley (Ed)
Earthy Realism.
The Meaning of Gaia
 ISBN 9781 8454 0080 4
 Imprint Academic, 2007, £8.95

The collection of essays in this book describes the damage we are doing to our world and suggests a way forward to a healthier re-ordering of ourselves and Mother Earth. At the heart of the short essays gathered in this book is the

Hilfield Friary Shop

Dorchester, Dorset DT2 7BE UK
 Tel: (01300) 341345
 Fax: (01300) 341293
 email: hilfieldssf@franciscans.org.uk

Open: Tue - Sat 2.30 - 4.30

The shop stocks religious books, including many with a Franciscan theme. Cards, postcards, candles, sweatshirts, tee-shirts, gifts and Traidcraft goods are also on sale.

Credit card facilities available

question: how to employ the powers of our 'advanced technology'? This book combines pessimistic critiques - is it too late to repair the damage? - with optimistic strategies that might begin to heal our wounded planet.

Under-girding this collection of fascinating and alarming essays is the concept of GAIA- Mother Earth is alive! "Perhaps the single, most important thing we can do to undo the harm we have done ...to our earth... is to fix firmly in our minds the thought: the earth is alive." The writers believe this Gaian concept to be one of the new, constructive visions that must replace the mechanistic Newtonian world-view, a view which has, for so long, framed our understanding of the planet. Earth, imagined as GAIA, has both a scientific and spiritual aspect. It deals in a variety of energies and "webs of connection", not separate items to be connected. Gaia is the name of an ancient Greek mother-goddess. The use of this personification challenges the notion that our physical world is inert and lifeless. We learn that the use of the name Gaia, personifying the earth as it does, makes it hard to perceive our planetary home as nothing more than a "miscellaneous heap of resources". GAIA understands mother earth as a self-monitoring system which acts as a whole. It can, then, be injured and it is vulnerable; prone to sickness or health. And because we are totally dependent on it, we are vulnerable too.

The essays contain cautions and suggestions; predictions of disasters and hopes for preserving our world for a viable future. At its heart, I found these critiques to be deeply Franciscan in their recognition of the inter-dependence of all living beings, indeed, the vital intertwining of all that exists. Our Sisters, the Rivers, arteries of the world. Our Brothers, the Trees, breathing out a wholesome atmosphere. A myriad of living beings who, along with us, are nurtured by Mother Earth.

In the essay Gaia and the Sacred Feminine, we read "...we cannot save what we don't love. In order to love, we need a sense and an image, and to feel this 'other' as part of our extended self."

The writings in this book call us to re-discover our collective relationship with GAIA.

Catherine Joy CSF

Peter Rollins

How (not) to speak of God

ISBN 9780 2810 5798 6

SPCK, 2006, £10.99

This is a brave book, and the Anglican reader has to remind her(him)self from time to time that it is not to be claimed as a fresh expression of a mission shaped Church of England. It comes from the philosophy department of Queen's University, Belfast and from the pen of Peter Rollins as "one of the first and most

hopeful expressions to date of Christian theology in the context of postmodernity". "Peter challenges us to embrace opposite ends of common modern polarities, and, in so doing, shows the creative and constructive power of what is commonly called deconstruction."

Rollins achieves this in two sections of the book, the first section - five chapters devoted to the transition from right belief to believing in the right way; the second more descriptive and less demanding, ten services in the life of Ikona, a community "iconic, apocalyptic, heretical, emerging and failing".

Well, he achieves it, no doubt, for the members of Ikona who one suspects to be, in the main, philosophy students. Will he be heard by a wider and less sophisticated audience? Can Anglicans in England take to heart what comes from the heart of this writer? Or, is he simply to be dismissed as, at best, ahead of his time, at worst a betrayer of our precious heritage? At the very least, he deserves a serious and considered hearing, so - please be brave in your turn, in response to a brave book.

Anselm, SSF

Philip North and John North (Eds)

Sacred Space:

House of God, Gate of Heaven

ISBN 9780 8264 9477 1

Continuum, 2007, £10.49

Sacred Space is a collection of essays, exploring the connections between place and holiness. The eight essays, from a broad spectrum of Christian traditions, were originally presented as a series of study days, to mark the 75th Anniversary of the restoration of the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham. *Sacred Space* is explored in a wide variety of manifestations, from buildings to art and literature.

Christian Pilgrimage, the making of a journey with a spiritual purpose or endeavour, seems to be as popular as ever. As well as giving ourselves more historical and theological insight into why some places and spaces present as specifically sacred and holy, this collection of essays could also help to promote discussion with people who, although they might be on the fringe of the Church, nonetheless are attracted to cultivating a sense of sacred space within their lives.

Maximilian SSF

Alan Bartlett

A Passionate Balance

The Anglican Tradition

ISBN 9870 2325 2596 0

DLT, 2007, £9.95

Alongside this book in the Christian Spirituality series the publishers have offered us over twenty others which describe what are perhaps more

Prayers from Franciscan Hearts:

*Contemporary Reflections
for Women and Men*

Edited by Paula Pearce SFO

St Anthony Messenger Press

ISBN 9780 8671 6741 2

£7.00

Available from the Franciscan
International Study Centre, Canterbury
01227 769 349

obviously sources of spirituality than are the muddy and compromised origins of the Church of England.

Many Anglicans would look to 'The Evangelical Tradition', 'The Franciscan Tradition', 'The Charismatic Tradition', etc., as guides for the Godward journey, and L. William Countryman has a more modest subtitle 'An Anglican Tradition' for his 'The Poetic Imagination' in the same series published by DLT.

So, can the origins of the Church of England; the founding fathers (Cranmer in particular); their immediate successors (Hooker the theologian, Herbert the poet); and luminaries of the four succeeding centuries (Laud, Butler, Wesley, Simeon, Westcott, Maurice, Dolling, Ramsey to name but a few) be regarded as constituting a tradition of Christian spirituality?

Bartlett is passionately convinced that they can, and sets out to convince his readers that this is so. The 'balance' of the book's title is that between scripture, tradition and reason in the Christian's search for God - as expounded by Hooker. The body of the book, written by one who until recently has taught Anglican Studies at Cranmer Hall, St John's College, Durham, makes a fascinating read for anyone in search of what it is that might be common ground for Anglicans in these tormented times. Anglican Franciscans will feel better grounded in their confessional faith tradition, without losing the riches of the legacy of Francis.

Anselm SSF

Bernard Bangley (Ed)

By Way of the Desert

Meditations from the Silent Wilderness

ISBN: 978-1-8470-6373-1

Continuum, 2008, £12.99

Whether you read this book as it is intended, taking a set reading each day of the year, or dipping in and out at random, you will find here a wealth of wisdom in these freshly paraphrased sayings of the desert fathers and mothers. Each saying is accompanied by a small portion of scripture; at the end of each daily reading a single simple phrase has been selected to be reflected upon, a phrase which provides food for thought, a challenge to change, and the ground for relationship with God to grow. It is a book which can be used profitably time and time again.

Benedict SSF

A Visit to Iran

Clark Berge SSF

What do you want for your birthday?"

"I want to go to Iran," I replied. My family wasn't sure it was such a good idea; but I have always wanted to go on a peace mission. It seemed like an appropriate way to celebrate a milestone and enrich my life experience. The Fellowship of Reconciliation sends four delegations a year to Iran; most Americans who travel there go with FOR (only 300-500 a year are permitted into the country each year). The December 2008 ten-day trip was the eighth delegation.

We were an interfaith group and our purpose was interfaith dialogue. The trip was co-sponsored by Shomer Shalom, a Jewish peace group. We were ten Jews and four Christians; six prospective members of the delegation (including some Muslims) were denied visas. Our hosts were from the government's Department of Education, the Centre for Inter-religious Dialogue. They planned our itinerary, made all arrangements and helped us in innumerable ways. They were also to listen to our conversations and record our meetings.

Even with government hosts, plans changed in the blink of an eye. We were asked to be flexible, and for the most part I was happy to let somebody else struggle with the details of travel in a group. It freed us up to pursue our unofficial agenda: to meet as many local people as we possibly could.



It was a relief albeit a bit humiliating that many, many people spoke some English. I could barely get out "salaam", though some members of the delegation picked up quite a bit of Farsi. The people we met were eager to talk, and these unofficial conversations were as far ranging and intimate as our official talks were formal and cautious. We wanted to know about the role of women in Iran, what it is like in Iran on a day to day basis, and to learn about Shi'ite Islam. Our civilian diplomacy was characterized by remarkable cordiality. Learning we were Americans they would say, "We love Americans!" Many tried to distance themselves from the official rhetoric of the President of Iran, insisting they only want peace and the freedom to live the way they want. Significantly they stressed that they have chosen their way of life and



Clark with the other members of the FOR delegation

valued their Islamic Republic. "Please, don't bomb us!" they would plead. The only war they've fought is a defensive war against Iraq which attacked with American supplied military equipment. I'd forgotten Saddam Hussein was once an American ally in our struggle to protect our oil supplies. Iran fears a "shock and awe" campaign.

We travelled by bus from Tehran to Qom, Estefan, Persepolis and Shiraz. We met several Ayatollahs, visited the Jewish synagogues in Tehran and Shiraz, met the Armenian Orthodox Archbishop and marvelled at the crowds thronging the mosques, and especially the young people who gathered at the tomb of Hafez in Shiraz. Iranians love poetry; they quote it, refer to it and the tomb of one of their greatest poets is a gathering place for young people. It is a bit like speed dating. They meet reciting poetry and then walk around the garden under the watchful eye of the morality police. But nothing can truly suppress the desire of young people to meet.

There really are morality police. They ensure women cover their heads and dress modestly. Men too must not wear shorts. There is no touching of the opposite sex in public. Our female delegates had to wear the hijab, the head covering. We were all curious about their reactions to it: hot, uncomfortable, but neither did they experience any

kind of harassment. A first for many of our young female delegates in a large city.

While the Iranian constitution protects the rights of Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians, even giving them representation in parliament, Shi'ite Islam is the dominant influence and brand of Islam followed in Iran. They are attracted to large festivals and practice hospitality with great diligence - platters of sweets and fruits and endless cups of tea and cold drinks were offered to us at every place we visited. In Shiraz we were able to join in the Friday evening prayers. The women donned huge lacy flower-spangled shawls. The men went to a different part of the mosque, where we sat, knelt or stood as we wished. Worshippers smiled at us. Some appeared very devout; other young men would interrupt their prayers to check their cell phones.

A culture that requires flexibility and prizes poetry has some real attraction for me. The beautiful mosques, palaces and gardens elicited gasps of astonishment. The welcome and generosity challenged my prejudices; I met them as fellow human beings. Civilian diplomacy is all about telling stories, trying to put a human face on "the other." It was a great joy to find such a lovely face. Few of us are in positions of power or able to direct the course of events. But we can take responsibility for examining our assumptions and learning as much as we can about other people, other religions. It doesn't mean we wish to be like them, only that we respect their right to be themselves and recognize them as part of the beautiful human family.

The Armenian Orthodox archbishop reminded us that evangelism is not "telling my neighbors that their religion is wrong and they must agree with me." Rather it is about serving the poor, the sick, the people in need. "In this way," he said, "we promote our faith and live by its highest principles." f

